

In just 30 years...

**The labour movement
and the development
of child care services
in Québec**

Child Care Human Resources Round Table

October 2001

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

Research and writing
François Aubry

Contribution to writing and editing
Christiane Plamondon

Printed in a Union Shop.

Permission is granted to photocopy any part or all of this report.

Foreword	1
Part one	2
1998-1999	2
The highlights of a successful union mobilization campaign.....	2
The initial issues.....	2
Favourable conditions.....	3
Brief chronology of union action.....	6
Assessment.....	8
Part two	9
1970-1999	9
A brief history of the struggle for child care in Québec.....	9
The 1960s	10
Origins of a movement.....	10
The 1970s	13
The Local Initiatives Programme.....	13
The 1970s (part 2)	16
From the Bacon plan to the first direct grants.....	16
The 1980s	21
Development and union organizing.....	21
The 1990s	25
Pay demands and a new family policy.....	25
Part Three	28
<i>Lessons of the past, plans for the future</i>	28
<i>Major issues for the coming years</i>	32
APPENDIX 1	35
<i>The new family policy and child care services</i>	35
APPENDIX 2	39
<i>Trends in Child Care Spaces</i>	39
APPENDIX 3	41
<i>Trends in Spending on Child Care Services</i>	41
APPENDIX 4	43
<i>Major gains for school-based, school-age child care employees</i>	43

RECEIVED
MAY 10 1964
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Foreword

The purpose of this paper is to outline a chronology of the events that led up to the historic settlement reached between the government of Québec and unions representing employees in child care centres in May 1999. It also seeks to describe the years of work these unions and other social groups put into mobilizing in order to achieve that agreement.

So this paper focuses solely on union work in the sector of preschool child care. There is a rich history of events and teachings to be learned from unions in the sector of school-based, school-age child care. But since this movement developed from the 1980s within the public sector in Québec – so within an entirely different context – it cannot be adequately discussed in the framework of this short paper.

It should be added that in this paper, the phrases “child care” and “child care centre” (the latter corresponding to both “garderie” and now “CPE,” for “centre de la petite enfance” in French) refer to non-profit child care services for preschool-age children, unless other types of child care services are explicitly mentioned.

Part one

1998-1999

The highlights of a successful union mobilization campaign

On May 22, 1999, the climate was euphoric as close to 1,000 child care workers at a special general meeting voted 94% in favour of a tentative agreement reached a few days earlier with the Québec government. The main points in this agreement were:

- average raises of 35.1% over four years,¹ with 12 % the first year;
- a national forum to be held to discuss the establishment of a pension plan;
- creation of a working committee on pay equity, with the mandate of proposing a method of job evaluation and pay redress for all categories of staff in child care centres.

This agreement, which on the whole satisfied union demands, came after an intensive mobilization campaign that had begun months earlier.

The initial issues

In the mobilization campaign that began in the fall of 1998, one of the main goals of the child care workers' unions was to get the Québec government to agree to negotiate certain working conditions at a central table. The demand was important, because the

¹ These adjustments correspond to an injection of \$148 million for 1999-2000 to 2002-2003.

collective bargaining system in force at the time provided that working conditions were to be settled by agreement with the board of directors in each child care centre.

The child care unions had tried several times previously to convince the government to negotiate pay at a central table. All the attempts had been fruitless. The government had always refused to negotiate pay directly with the unions, claiming that the boards of directors of child care centres were the real employers, since the child care centres were independent legal entities. Even though the government subsidized child care centres, it considered that it was up to each centre to decide how the grants would be divided between payroll and other operating expenses.

After strikes and other pressure tactics during the 1990s, the unions had nonetheless succeeded in making some breaches in the government's position of principle, and a certain number of working conditions were in fact negotiated centrally. But the unions realized that extraordinary bargaining clout would be needed to force the government to concede substantial catch-up pay hikes and, above all, to negotiate a single pay scale for all child care workers.

After analysing the situation at length, union representatives judged that the context was favourable to child care workers this time. First of all, there was no doubt that the union members were determined to wage the battle. As well, a number of objective conditions had been put in place in recent years that seemed to favour the union side.

Favourable conditions

The need for early childhood services

In Québec, there has been a public debate on high dropout rates and equal opportunities at school for almost a decade. Public opinion reflects considerable concern about this social problem and calls for concrete measures. A number of studies have demonstrated the positive impact of good-quality child care on children's learning, especially those from economically depressed backgrounds, and its effectiveness as a way of helping to prevent students from dropping out of school later or becoming involved in juvenile delinquency.

So since the mid-1990s, the urgency of improving early childhood services and making them more generally available has been emphasized repeatedly. In fact, the Commission of the Estates General on Education noted the *"inadequacy, dispersal and inconsistency of early childhood services. This situation appears to be even more serious in light of the fact that the social changes of the past few decades – the*

*entry of more women into the labour market, the rise in the number of single-parent families...and the increase in the number of poor families with young children – have obliged parents to entrust part of their children's care and education to specialized services."*²

In its February 1996 opinion on the integrated development of early childhood educational services, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (Higher council on education) proposed that the creation of regulated child care services for children aged 3 and under be continued, and stated its preference for non-profit child care services as the appropriate educational services for 4-year-olds, and kindergarten for 5-year-olds.³ Then in March 1996, the Bouchard, Labrie and Noël Report on the reform of income security pointed to the lack of sufficient child care services for young children and concluded that *"attending quality day care should be a priority for all children... regardless of whether the parents are employed."*⁴

As we will see in more detail, this was the policy the government opted for in developing its family policy.

² *The Estates General on Education, 1995-1996: The State of Education in Québec* (1996), Commission des États généraux sur l'éducation, Québec.

³ *Pour un développement intégré des services éducatifs à la petite enfance : de la vision à l'action* (1996), Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, MEQ, Québec.

⁴ Camil BOUCHARD, Vivianne LABRIE et Alain NOËL (1996), *Chacun sa part*, Montréal.

The necessity of offering pay in keeping with job requirements

All the opinions in favour of the development of early childhood services are based on the quality of the experience children can have in child care, which implies that employees working there must be properly qualified. But how can specialized training be a job requirement when the pay offered is so clearly inadequate?

Since the creation of the first community child care centres in Québec early in the 1970s, the wretched pay of child care workers is an issue that has been raised regularly. Over the years, surveys have always shown strong public support for the demand for adjustments in pay. In the same vein, in a 1994 opinion to the Québec government, the advisory Conseil du statut de la femme (Status of women council) recommended a substantial upgrading of pay in the sector of child care.

In 1996, when the Pay Equity Act came into force, the issue of discriminatory pay and low-wage job female ghettos was put back on the agenda. Prevailing rates of pay in child care are often cited as a typical example of pay discrimination. In fact, the comparison "*zoo-keepers are better paid than child care workers*" became a popular shorthand summary of the situation. It became more and more embarrassing for the politicians responsible for child care services to ignore the injustice. Thus, during the 1998 election campaign, Lucien Bouchard acknowledged that pay for child

care workers was a distinct issue and that the possibility of centralized negotiations between the unions and his government might have to be envisaged.

The government's willingness to act: announcement of a new family policy

By the middle of the decade, public opinion and politicians had been made aware of the issue of working conditions in the child care sector, and were favourably inclined to improvements. As well, an event helped add considerable weight to union demands: the Québec government's announcement at the Summit Conference on the Economy and Employment, in 1996, of the main components of a new family policy, followed by the publication a few months later of the White Paper *Les enfants au cœur de nos choix*,⁵ outlining the three main measures in this policy.

The reform called for the replacement of two agencies, the Office des services de garde à l'enfance (OSGE – Child care services board) and the Secrétariat à la famille (Secretariat for the family) with a new ministry of family and child welfare, the Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance. It also extended the responsibilities of child care services, which were henceforth grouped together in a network of child care centres. (The main elements of this reform are summed up in *Appendix 1*).

⁵ *Les Enfants au cœur de nos choix : les nouvelles dispositions de la politique familiale* (January 1997), Gouvernement du Québec, ministère du Conseil exécutif.

The three main focal points of the new family policy were:

1. The introduction of a new family allowance replacing or modifying certain existing programs, and varying depending on the family situation, family income and number of children.
2. The development of early childhood educational and child care services ensuring:
 - access to full-time kindergarten for 5-year-olds, and half-time kindergarten or educational services for 4-year-olds with disabilities or from underprivileged environments;
 - gradual access for children under 5 to educational child care services at minimal cost;
3. The establishment, after negotiations with the federal government, of a much more accessible parental insurance plan providing a higher percentage of income replacement. The proposed parental insurance would cover both self-employed workers and employees.

When the Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance was created in 1997, the development plan called for all early childhood child care services to become universally available for a fee of \$5 per day per child over a four-year period. At the time, it was announced that the number of spaces would be doubled, with 100,000 new spaces and more than 12,000 jobs created between 1998-1999 and 2005-2006.

After that, the \$5-a-day policy was extended to child care services at schools. The school boards were henceforth responsible for developing these services when they were required by a decision of the school's governing council, composed of parents and staff.

So the child care services sector was to expand considerably, growing at an unprecedented rate.

Towards a single pay scale

The new family policy set the parents' contribution at \$5 a day per child, with the government making up the shortfall in revenue, or about 85% of the total cost. But as it introduced this flat-rate approach, it became more and more imperative for the government to participate in negotiations on employees' pay and fringe benefits, since these budget items accounted for almost 80% of operating expenses in child care. The flat rate for parents and the method of government funding made a single pay scale look like a logical step, since the differences in pay from one child care centre to the next, for the same job, could no longer be justified on the basis of differences in revenue. But a harmonized pay scale couldn't be achieved without centralized negotiations with the government, which had a stake in them since it was the funder.

A new argument in favour of an adjustment in pay

Apart from the issue of a single scale, there was also the problem of an adjustment in pay. Given the government's choices with

respect to family policy, the contradiction between the lot of child care workers, namely the lack of recognition of the value of their work, and the crucial role that they are supposed to play became untenable. Consequently, the projected pace of development of child care spaces meant that without improvements in pay, without recognition of the value of this work, the risk of a shortage of qualified workers was extremely high.

Brief chronology of union action

Recent developments meant that all the favourable conditions for a mobilization of child care workers were finally in place. Child care employees and their union representatives could now seriously envisage the possibility of centralized bargaining.

In the fall of 1998, child care unions affiliated with the CSN asked the government to sit down at a central table and discuss three demands:

1. A substantial adjustment in pay and the creation of a single pay scale for the entire child care network;
2. The establishment of a sectoral pay equity committee;
3. The creation of a committee whose mandate would be to establish a pension plan for staff.

Mobilization and awareness

Union mobilization began towards the end of October 1998 with an information campaign for members and the use of pressure tactics such as wearing buttons in the workplace. In November, an information and awareness campaign for parents was launched. A national day of action, during which workers would wear red, black and green, was announced.

Recent months

On February 6, 1999, an action plan was adopted by early childhood centre unions affiliated with the Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux (FSSS-CSN). At the same time, workers belonging to the CEQ (Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec – central Québec teachers' union) implemented pressure tactics.

From March to May 1999, events picked up speed:

March 1

Union members visited members of the National Assembly (MNAs) to inform them of demands and ask for their support.

March 3

A CSN delegation met with representatives of the Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance.

March 6

In general meetings, members of CSN unions voted 90% in favour of an indefinite general strike at the appropriate time. They organized demonstrations in various regions of Québec.

March 11

Union delegates met with MNAs from the Official Opposition in Québec City.

April 1

A one-day strike by the CSN and demonstration of 5,000 people in Montréal, including parents and employees from non-union child care centres.

April 8

Second one-day strike by the CSN, demonstration in Québec City and occupation of Finance Minister Bernard Landry's office. A meeting was promised for the next day with Minister Nicole Léger, responsible for child care.

April 9

Meeting between the FSSS-CSN Bargaining Committee and Minister Nicole Léger. The latter said that she agreed a single pay scale was relevant and understood the urgency of raising pay for child care employees. She committed herself to finding a solution before the end of the spring, but no specific calendar or deadlines were set. The call for an indefinite general strike was maintained, with April 22 set as the date on which it would start.

April 21

Nicole Léger set up a tripartite working committee composed of representatives of the government, CSN and CEQ child care unions and groups acting as employer representatives. The committee's mandate was to analyse the three main demands of FSSS-CSN unions. The committee was to complete its work by May 21 at the latest. The indefinite general strike was suspended.

May 20

Tentative agreement on the three main demands. The three points in the agreement were: 1) a national forum to be held to discuss the establishment of a pension plan; 2) creation of a working committee on pay equity, with the mandate of proposing a method of job evaluation and pay redress; 3) an average raise in pay of 35.1% over four years, with 12% the first year.

May 22

At a special general meeting, more than 1,000 workers in child care centres affiliated with the FSSS-CSN voted 94% to accept the tentative agreement.

Assessment

For workers in the child care sector in Québec, this agreement was a great victory that came after a long battle for recognition of the value of their work.⁶

The May agreement was followed in December by substantial gains for employees in the school-based, school-age child care sector, including pay adjustments of between 11% and 23%, depending on job titles.⁷

The agreement also had an impact for home child care providers, since it allowed for the government grant for each child to be reassessed upwards.

The two agreements are undeniably historic. First, because they are the culmination of one of the largest mobilization campaigns by child care employees, which moreover enjoyed significant support from coalitions of child care centres, parents and the general public. Finally, the May and December 1999 agreements must also be seen as the result of broad mobilization by various social movements in Québec that began thirty years ago with the creation of the first community child care centres, followed a

⁶ The agreement applies to all employees in child care centres, regardless of whether they are unionized.

⁷ A summary of the main gains made for school-based, school-age child care employees in this agreement is included in an appendix.

decade later by the creation of the first unions in the child care sector.

As we will see, the key moments in this history were marked by progress towards government commitment and involvement in the organization of child care and peak periods of union and mass mobilization on this issue.

Part two

1970-1999

A brief history of the struggle for child care in Québec

It is worth briefly reviewing the key events in the history of child care services for children of preschool age and highlighting the key moments, which were often preceded by intensive periods of mass and union mobilization. But in such a short paper, it is of course impossible to convey the wealth and complexity of these thirty years of history. If you are interested in learning more of the history of child care, there are several publications that discuss it at greater length.⁸

⁸ To prepare this chronology, we consulted union documents, government publications and the following works: Micheline LALONDE-GRATON (1985), *La P'tite histoire des garderies*, Regroupement des garderies de la région 6-c ; Marie LÉGER (1986), *Les garderies : le fragile équilibre du pouvoir*, Les Éditions de l'Arche ; Ghislaine DESJARDINS (1991), *Faire garder ses enfants au Québec. Une histoire toujours en marche*, Les Publications du Québec.

The 1960s

Origins of a movement

The first child care centres in Québec were founded in Montréal back in 1863 by the Grey Nuns. Intended as works of charity, they received children from underprivileged families. They were funded mainly by the parents and charitable donations, with only a small contribution from the provincial government. These day nurseries gradually died out between 1900 and 1920, when they were replaced with orphanages.

Until the end of the 1960s, with the exception of the years from 1942 to 1946,⁹ people relied on family members, friends or neighbours for child care.

The rapid growth in women's participation in the labour market towards the end of the 1960s resulted in more and more children being looked after in conditions that left much to be desired. A number of citizens' groups, women's associations and community groups also wanted to get society to recognize that it has a collective responsibility for child care. They therefore demanded that the provincial and federal governments set up quality child care services, funded by government and available to all parents.

⁹ Given the tremendous demand for women workers during World War II, a federal-provincial agreement ensured wartime funding for child care centres in the workplace.

Here are a few events related to the history of child care that marked the decade:

1966

The Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale (AFEAS – Feminine association for education and social action) and the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ – Québec women's federation) were founded.

1967

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada (the Bird Commission) was established. Women's associations called for the creation of a network of public child care centres. Published in 1970, the Commission's report argued that child care was a responsibility to be shared by the mother, the father and society. It therefore proposed the creation of a network of child care centres offering different types of child care services.

Late 1960s

A number of community groups were created in poor neighbourhoods throughout Québec. They organized various services for the population: medical and legal clinics, food co-ops, etc. At the time as well, the idea of creating a network of child care centres was gaining ground in education circles and community organizations. Child care

was demanded to allow women to take on work outside the home and to meet children's needs for socialization.

1968

Delegates from more than a hundred associations founded the Comité d'organisation pour la promotion des services de garderies de jour pour les enfants dans la Province de Québec (Organizing committee to promote child care services for children in Québec).

The Ministry of Family and Welfare was put in charge of issuing permits to existing child care centres. As part of a pilot project, the government also subsidized a few child care centres in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Montréal.

1969

The Front de libération des femmes du Québec (FLF – Québec women's liberation front) was founded. The organization demanded government-funded child care, open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. The Fédération des femmes du Québec demanded the creation of a network of child care services.

At the time, there were a few government-funded child care centres, as well as 58 private, for-profit child care centres in the English-speaking and immigrant communities. Despite the increasingly numerous voices demanding government intervention, the governments continued a hands-off

policy, since parents were considered to be solely responsible for taking care of their children. There were nevertheless a few government-subsidized child care centres, but they were for families in need.

1971

The Québec government finally began to pay attention to the demands from the women's movement and community groups, and set up an interministerial committee to examine the issue of child care and financial assistance to mothers holding jobs. The committee issued recommendations on the type of services that these child care centres should offer and the standards that they should meet to control the quality of services. It also proposed the creation of a network of government-subsidized child care centres for the target groups judged to be the priorities, namely handicapped children and children from economically depressed environments with family problems. As for assistance to mothers holding jobs, the committee proposed a system of tax credits to relieve the tax burden for mothers using child care.

1972

Following the recommendations from the 1971 interministerial committee, the Ministry of Social Affairs in Québec set mandatory minimum standards that had to be met as a condition for obtaining an operating permit.

1974

The federal government relaxed regulations for the Canada Assistance Plan to allow more generous funding of child care services for families on social assistance.

The 1970s

The Local Initiatives Programme

At the beginning of the 1970s, the federal government introduced the Local Initiatives Programme (LIP) to fund community projects that created jobs. Between 1972 and 1974, the programme was used to set up some 70 child care centres, including 30 in Montréal. Constituted for the most part as non-profit organizations controlled by the parent users, these child care centres served working-class, and often poor, neighbourhoods. But their long-term survival was hard to ensure, since the meagre grants, renewable every six months, were only intended to pay wages. How could child care centres pay the rent with this kind of funding?

Over and above inadequate funding, the rules on issuing operating permits kept the child care centres caught in an endless vicious circle: Québec refused to grant a permit unless long-term funding was ensured; and Ottawa required that a permit be obtained before giving a grant. The situation was conducive to mounting dissatisfaction.

The background to the first stirrings of mobilization

The feminist movement was very active in the 1970s. Simultaneously with women's groups and coalitions and women's committees in the main labour organizations, new organizations dedicated to the defence of women's rights were

created, including two government bodies: the Conseil du statut de la femme in Québec, and the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women in Ottawa. All these organizations demanded government intervention that would expand access to child care, which was considered crucial to the social mobility of women.

This was the background to the tremendous mobilization that developed when the government decided to terminate the Local Initiatives Programme in December 1972. The child care centres joined together to create the Comité de liaison des garderies populaires (Community child care centres liaison committee), which demanded the establishment of a universal network of child care centres funded by government and controlled by the users.

The mobilization was organized on two fronts: child care advocates demanded that the federal government continue the temporary grants paid through the LIP projects; and they demanded that the Québec government adopt appropriate legislation and a permanent funding mechanism. The response from the Québec government was swift: there would be no additional financial assistance, on the pretext once again that child care was a parental responsibility.

Subsequent events forced the government to shift its position. The Liaison Committee

soon organized a few attention-grabbing actions: occupation of the offices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the officials in charge of the LIP; information campaign in the media, which showed sympathy for the cause.

Québec Premier Robert Bourassa finally took a position: henceforth, the Ministry of Social Affairs would no longer make guaranteed funding a condition for obtaining an operating permit for child care. The community child care centres had won a first victory. Many of them soon obtained their permit from Québec, and then their grant from Ottawa.

The labour organizations join in

The first concessions won from the Québec government did not mean that the struggle was over, and the three labour organizations played a leading role in pressing for the demands.

It was the women in their recently created status of women committees who organized the mobilization for free, universal child care. The movement was begun by the FTQ, which created a study committee on the status of women (Comité d'étude sur la condition féminine) in 1972. The CEQ endorsed the main demand of the Liaison Committee at its July 1973 convention. With the creation of the Laure Gaudreault Committee the next fall, child care became a priority issue for the CEQ. The CSN followed suit the year after, setting up a similar committee.

On December 19, 1973, the Liaison Committee organized a joint press conference with the CSN, CEQ and FTQ. It was the first time the central labour organizations spoke out publicly on child care.

The women's committees of the three labour organizations participated actively in organizing International Women's Day on March 8, 1974, along with the community child care centres, the Association pour la défense des droits sociaux (Association for the defence of social rights) and the Centre des femmes (Women's centre), which replaced the FLF in 1972. The child care issue was a major part of the event.

Looking back over the decade, the joint press conference on December 19, 1973 and the March 8 day in 1974 must be seen as milestones in this history. Almost ten years before the founding of the first child care workers' union in 1980, the labour movement joined with other progressive organizations such as women's groups and community organizations to demand that a network of child care centres be created.

All this mobilization finally forced the Québec government to introduce a programme aimed at partially funding child care services. Introduced in 1974, the Bacon plan – named for Lise Bacon, the minister in charge of the issue – provided for start-up grants for new non-profit child care centres, as well as subsidies for very low-income parents.

These new measures – which fell far short of the demands of the social movements – nonetheless constituted a first step towards acknowledging collective responsibility for child care. It also marked the start of a process of recognizing these services.

The 1970s (part 2)

From the Bacon plan to the first direct grants

The Bacon plan marked the start of a difficult period for community child care centres: they no longer received the direct grants for wages that the LIP projects had provided, and the funding levels under the Bacon plan were inadequate, forcing the child care centres to charge parents more. A number of child care centres ran into serious problems and had to close. The non-profit centres that managed to survive did so with difficulty, thanks to volunteer work by parents and employees. They never managed to really constitute a basic operating fund, and eked out a day-to-day existence from one loan to the next. Not many parents were subsidized, and their financial contributions were not enough to cover operating costs. Staff were very poorly paid.

The tension between the need to keep parents' fees moderate and the necessity of decent working conditions for employees has been a constant in the history of child care services in Québec.

The debate on the issue of collective responsibility for child care resurfaced. Mobilization continued in community child care centres, the women's movement, community organizations and the labour organizations. In June 1975, about a dozen organizations, political movements, labour organizations, the Civil Liberties League and the Parti Québécois organized a joint

press conference to demand a review of the policy adopted in 1974.

Opposition to the Bacon plan extended well beyond child care circles. Other grassroots groups, women's groups and unions were dissatisfied too, and said so. The daily newspapers covered the issue extensively. Increasingly, the child care issue was at the top of the list of the demands of the majority of women's associations.¹⁰

Under pressure from all sides, Minister Lise Bacon promised to reassess the child care assistance programme. In 1975, she created the Service des garderies (child care agency). The mandate of the agency, which reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs, was to promote the establishment of new child care centres and provide technical support to existing centres.

A new government, a few appreciable gains

1976 was the year the Parti Québécois was elected for the first time. Following through in its commitments, the new government increased the financial assistance for parents and raised the levels of grants for outfitting premises and equipment. Start-up grants were given to non-profit child care centres

¹⁰ Ghislaine Desjardins, *op. cit.*, p. 50

serving underprivileged neighbourhoods, and an emergency fund was made available to child care centres.

Finally, the government created an interministerial committee on early childhood services which was to develop a comprehensive policy aimed at developing child care services that were better adapted to what people needed.

A number of child care groups emerged in the following years, with most of them winding up as members of the Regroupement des garderies sans but lucratif du Québec (RGQ – coalition of non-profit child care centres), founded in 1978. Another independent group, SOS garderie (SOS child care) existed alongside the RGQ and fought very bitter battles from the late 1970s until 1982 for access to free premises in schools that were no longer in use in Montréal.

A policy that marked a turning point

In February 1978, the interministerial committee tabled its report, and cabinet endorsed a new policy in October the same year. It said that child care services would from then on be funded jointly by parents, in accordance with their income, and government. As well, the policy would favour non-profit organizations with parent-controlled boards of directors. In an unprecedented move, the first operating grants paid directly to child care centres were introduced: operating funds equal to 15% of the financial assistance granted to parents. Finally, child care centres open for

less than three years were given special assistance to renew equipment and outfit or renovate the premises.

This marked a new step towards recognition of government responsibility for the funding of child care services. But the grant formula that was proposed was strongly criticized because of the disparities it created between child care centres serving very disadvantaged but heavily subsidized parents and those serving working parents who did not receive any government assistance. The attribution rules were such that no operating grant could be paid to the child care centre for the latter group of parents, thus compromising the quality of services to the children and any improvement in working conditions for child care staff.

The method of funding, which tied the amount of grants to assistance paid to parents, was vigorously condemned, and a system of financial assistance geared to the total number of spaces in the child care centre was proposed instead. So in 1979, the government adjusted its policy and abolished the operating fund grant equal to 15% of financial assistance to parents, replacing it with a grant of \$2 per day per authorized space on the permit.

Although the level of financial assistance was still low, this reform marked a major turning point in the history of child care in Québec. For the first time, government financial assistance was no longer tied to the parents' ability to pay. Child care services

were no longer considered a matter of social assistance, and the principle of collective responsibility was clearly established.

In 1979, a new child care act and a new policy were announced. The government set out three principles that were to be taken into account in organizing child care:

1. Parent participation in the organization and running of child care services: the government intended to give precedence to non-profit organizations and co-op centres in which the board of directors was composed of a majority of parents of children attending the child care centre.
2. Freedom of choice for parents among a range of four types of child care: child care centres, home child care, school-based, school-age child care and drop-in child care. Only the first two types of services required a permit, which could only be issued to non-profit organizations – thus excluding private, for-profit child care centres.
3. Access to services through bigger budgets and an increase in the number of available services.

Many groups and labour organizations submitted briefs during parliamentary hearings on the draft legislation. While they welcomed government's recognition of its responsibility, they had many reservations about the new policy. For some, there was a danger of too much government interference in the internal affairs of child care centres. Others were strongly opposed to the development of other forms of child care, such as home child care. For-profit child care centres pressed their case, demanding access to government funding. They were the only group that thought they should be given permits by the Office des services de garde (OSGE – child care services board), the new agency that the draft legislation proposed creating.

But the version of the bill presented for second reading provoked a lot of anger in child care circles. Contrary to the provisions of the original bill, the government finally decided that the OSGE could issue operating permits to private for-profit child care centres. Many felt betrayed by the change of position.

A broad coalition organized swiftly to block adoption of the new bill. But despite the opposition, the legislation was finally assented to in December 1979. Even though some aspects of the law did not measure up to expectations, the child care movement had made some major gains:

For the child care coalitions, it was the end of an era. After years of struggle and repeated pressure, the law finally entrenched a certain number of principles for which they had fought. From then on, it would no longer be possible to go back, because the existence of child care was an established fact in Québec. But there was still work to do to increase the quantity of services, make them more accessible to parents, improve the quality of existing services and give Québec a real policy on child care. This was the challenge of the 1980s.¹¹

In the future, the demands would focus on developing the network and expanding direct funding for child care centres. The child care movement would seek to make services available to more children from middle-class families and improve working conditions of staff, who had suffered greatly during all the years of chronic underfunding of child care services.

The act passed in December 1979 also gave the OSGE authority to regulate, issue

¹¹ Ghislaine Desjardins, *op. cit.*, p. 66

permits, make inspections, administer grants, designate regional OSGE representatives and define their duties. Once officially established in 1980, the OSGE reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs. In 1982, it was put under the authority of the minister for the Status of Women.

The presence of unions as these demands were raised

Although the labour movement in Québec did not take a leadership role on the demands, it did support the idea of a free, universal network of child care services throughout the decade. A number of examples illustrate the labour movements' on-going efforts in bringing this demand to the government's attention:

1976

The Common Front of public-sector unions reiterated union members' desire for a full network of free child care. The same year, the CSN convention further refined this basic demand by adding that child care centres should be run by users and staff members. It also called for solid government commitment, of course, but did not want to sacrifice the community, participatory nature of these services, something that has been an on-going issue since the demands were first raised.

1977

The inter-central Status of Women Committee decided to take up this joint demand and clarify it.

1979

The États généraux de la condition féminine (a broad, inter-union meeting on the status of women), held on March 3 in Québec City, adopted a common action plan for the establishment of a free, universal system of child care. As part of this action plan, the CSN, the CEQ and the Canadian Union of Public Employees jointly published a document entitled *Dossier garderies: pour un réseau universel et gratuit* (Child care: for a free, universal system) in which they laid out the goals and reasons for the demand. They cited the basic principles that were to guide the implementation of such a system:

- universal services;
- accessible to everyone;
- free of charge;
- sufficient numbers of well-paid staff, with readier access to unionization;
- staff ratios and standards for the facilities that correspond to the real needs of the child care centres;
- management that guaranteed autonomy and the participation of users and staff members.

In conclusion, they said:

These are guarantees that we will continue to demand as a token of recognition of every person's genuine right to employment and the fair division of work within a society collectively concerned for its survival and development.

Union organizations in the 1970s joined with other social movements to advocate the principle of direct funding for child care centres rather than assistance to low-income parents, which was what the Bacon plan provided.

Over the next decade, the labour movement intervened simultaneously on two fronts: the broader issue of the introduction of free, universal child care within a network of child care centres controlled by parents and staff; and the defence and promotion of the more immediate interests of child care workers.

The 1980s

Development and union organizing

The OSGE's work

During the 1980s, the Office des services de garde à l'enfance prepared five-year plans for gradually increasing the number of child care spaces and reducing regional disparities. The agency also drew up sectoral policies on various aspects of child care services, such as staff training, premises, funding, infant care, the integration of handicapped children and home child care. But success in meeting these goals was compromised by limited budget resources. These are some of the highlights of the OSGE's work:

1983

The Regulation on child care services in child care centres, which set minimum conditions for services, replaced the Ministry of Social Affairs standards, which dated back to 1972.

1984

The OSGE adopted a policy on home child care and infant care.

1979 to 1989

Operating grants for child care centres were raised from \$2 to \$4.50 for each space on the permit.

The era of organizing child care centres

In the early 1980s, the CSN succeeded in organizing the first unions in the child care sector. The child care coalitions strongly

supported organizing, which was seen as an additional strategic tool for supporting the efforts to consolidate the network and improve working conditions. By 1982, some 70 child care centres – including 40 in Montréal – had a union affiliated with the CSN. After bitter debates about what organizational structure to choose, child care workers opted for regional unions. The regional union in Montréal was founded in 1980, those in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and Québec City in 1981, one in the Estrie (Eastern Townships) in 1983, etc.

Right from the first years of these unions' existence, two tendencies emerged concerning the direction that bargaining strategy should take. The first favoured negotiating a collective agreement for each child care centre and collaboration with the child care coalitions to pursue the demands raised in the previous decade, namely an increase in direct grants to child care centres and development of the network. The other tendency opted instead for negotiating pay directly with the Québec government for all child care centres and regional agreements on non-monetary clauses. The second tendency won out, after divisive debates that tore the unions apart. In fact, a few months later, workers in 21 child care centres decided to leave the CSN.

Nonetheless, in 1982 the regional unions composed of employees in about 80 child care centres asked the public-sector Common Front (CSN-CEQ-FTQ)¹² to include the child care sector in negotiations on pay at the central table. But these negotiations ended abruptly when the government decided to decree substantial pay cuts for public and para-public sector employees. At the regional level, progress was slow in talks on non-monetary clauses; the collective agreements were only signed two years after the start of negotiations, creating great dissatisfaction and sparking a movement to disaffiliate.

In the years following the 1982 negotiations, the child care sector grew rapidly, but there was little progress on pay. Divisions developed within the child care coalitions and unions: some advocated nationalization of child care centres, with the Ministry of Education taking charge of them; others defended autonomy and parent participation in management, principles that some thought were jeopardized by the actions of the OSGE. The majority of unionized employees were affiliated with the CSN; others joined the CEQ or the FTQ, or founded independent unions.

¹² In the early 1970s, the three central union organizations (CEQ, CSN, FTQ) joined together in a Common Front to negotiate working conditions for government employees with the government. Some clauses, including pay and pensions, were negotiated at a central table.

The failure of the first round of negotiations with the government

As the three central labour organizations prepared for another round of bargaining with the government in 1985, the child care unions considered pressing for their pay demands separately. But one year before the decrees (which had replaced collective agreements since 1982) expired, the government announced that it was reopening them, and invited the central labour organizations to negotiate. Once again, the child care unions tried to be represented in these negotiations. Although they began by trying for a centralized forum for negotiations with the OSGE on all the working conditions (pay and non-monetary clauses) that a province-wide collective agreement ought to cover, the unions shifted to demanding a bargaining table for pay and regulations affecting working conditions (such as training requirements, child/staff ratios, etc.).

The Québec government was adamantly opposed to centralized negotiations on pay. The parties finally came to an agreement providing for the creation of a table bringing together the OSGE and the unions to negotiate three matters: training, maternity leave and group insurance. But it proved impossible to get the bargaining table organized, as the minister in charge, Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, did everything she could to put it off, justifying the delays with the imminent – but constantly postponed – publication of a policy statement on child care. The wait lasted for several years, during which the unions tried

to keep up the pressure. But as the years went by, mobilization dwindled.

Meanwhile, again on the pretext that it was about to issue a policy statement, the government refused to increase grants to child care centres. This was the only hope for improving pay without charging parents more. Given the effect of inflation, pay deteriorated in many child care centres during these years.

Fierce opposition to the proposed reform of funding

In 1988, child care unions had to decide once again whether they would join the Common Front of public-sector unions or bargain on their own. They were demanding a pay scale that would give them parity with employees in youth reception centres in the public system.

In November 1988, as the unions prepared to decide where they would file their demands, the long-awaited policy statement was finally released by the Minister Gagnon-Tremblay. According to her, this policy statement was the government's response to the unions' demands. It set out a new method for funding child care centres, with an injection of funds into the network of child care services and the creation of 60,000 spaces over five years.¹³

¹³ At the time, the Conservative government in Ottawa had announced that it intended to invest massively in child care services.

But some parts of the policy statement caused indignation in the non-profit child care sector. The new method of funding would abolish all direct grants except those for infant care and handicapped children, and replace them with a new annual grant equal to 45% of all child care revenue. In other words, instead of receiving \$4.50 per child, each child care centre would obtain a grant equal to 45% of what the parents paid. The child care centres with the highest fees would get the most in grants. The consequence of this policy would be to penalize child care centres serving middle-income families and encourage higher fees. And it would favour for-profit child care services.

A coalition composed of the CSN, CEQ and Concertation, a child care coalition, was set up to fight the proposed reform. The coalition demanded the continuation of grants based on authorized spaces on the permit, with the amount increased from \$4.50 to \$9.00. Mobilization grew from December 1988 to June 1989. While parliamentary hearings were held in Québec City, two province-wide demonstrations, regional actions and press conferences were organized. Unions held four one-day strikes, and the minister in charge of the issue was constantly challenged by opponents of the reform.

The Bourassa government reacted to the outcry by modifying the proposed method of funding. The highly contested grant was replaced by two: one of \$30,000 per child care centre, regardless of the number of

authorized spaces on the permit; and another equal to 30% of the total amount of parents' financial contributions.

For the child care movement, the new proposal did not resolve the problem of the underfunding of child care services. So Concertation, an inter-regional coalition of child care centres in Québec, asked its members to protest by closing their doors. And parents, workers and child care administrators from all parts of Québec demonstrated in Montréal to protest the reform and demand a substantial improvement in funding for child care services.

The unions felt that the new funding policy would not allow for an improvement in working conditions. To show their opposition to government policy and remind the government of its December 1986 commitments – i.e., a central bargaining table on job training, maternity leave and group insurance – the unions set in motion an action plan of demonstrations, occupations and some one-day strikes.

Finally, on June 28, 1989, an agreement was reached between the CSN and the government. The agreement provided for the injection of an additional \$4 million per year to introduce a group insurance plan, maternity leave and a policy of training subsidies.

But it did nothing to solve the problem of poor working conditions. This would be the battle of the 1990s.

The 1990s

Pay demands and a new family policy

In February 1990, a national meeting of union delegates from the CSN's child care sector decided to give priority to improving pay. They did a survey of current rates of pay in child care centres, and then on the basis of the data compiled, decided that their demand would be for an increase of \$3.50 an hour over three years. The demand was submitted to Minister Violette Trépanier in September 1992.

Mobilization and public education

From 1992 to 1994, the child care movement and the labour movement waged a vast offensive aimed at mobilizing members and informing the public about the poor working conditions that prevailed in child care centres.

In March 1993, the majority of child care unions affiliated with the CSN voted to hold a one-day strike on April 22. The date had been proclaimed a "North American Day against low pay in child care", with strikes and demonstrations planned in the United States and Canadian provinces, with a view to generating public awareness of the low rates of pay in child care.

A series of one-day strikes followed in various regions of Québec: May 18 in the Outaouais, May 20 in Québec City, May 21 in the Saguenay, May 26 in Montréal, and May 28 in the Estrie, Gaspésie, Bas-Saint-

Laurent and Bois-Francs. The unions demanded that Minister Trépanier set up a committee to examine the issue of pay in the child care sector. She refused. When they failed to receive a positive response, the CSN unions held another one-day strike on September 30, and their members demonstrated in front of the National Assembly.

However, not everybody in child care agreed on which goals and methods were the best way to win. On November 28, for instance, the Regroupement des garderies de Montréal and Concertation organized a big march of the non-profit child care centres in the streets of Montréal. The demonstration was organized to support their specific demand for an immediate injection of \$15 million in the child care network to allow for an increase in pay and a freeze on parents' fees.

Generally speaking, the campaign more than achieved its goals. In terms of public awareness, the population was better informed about the situation and seemed more sympathetic than ever to the cause. In fact, 74% of people interviewed for a SOM-La Presse-Radio-Québec survey considered that "*the pay demands of child care workers are fair and legitimate.*"¹⁴

¹⁴ The results of this survey, done in April 1994, were published in *La Presse*, May 6, 1994.

Higher pay: towards a solution

In the spring of 1994, preparations were under way for a new action plan calling for a wide range of tactics, including a variable number of one-day strikes in certain regions and an indefinite general strike in certain child care centres.

In March 1994, the CSN's provincial child care committee asked the government to give each non-profit child care centre part of the increase in pay between January 1, 1994 and March 31, 1995 in the form of a grant of \$3,000 per full-time position or the equivalent. The committee also demanded the creation of a working committee charged with coming up with a permanent solution to the problem of pay. Finally, the CSN committee released its action plan, which consisted of a strike movement to begin on March 30, 1994.

On March 30, three child care centres in the Montréal area went out on an indefinite general strike. Throughout the province, actions were organized in support of the movement begun in Montréal. Each week, three new child care centres in the Montréal area joined the indefinite strike movement. Meanwhile, the meeting between Premier Johnson and representatives of the CSN and Concertaction was fruitless. So the strike movement picked up momentum and on April 21 – which was also the "second North American Day for pay in child care – nearly all the child care unions affiliated with the CSN were on strike, with a dozen on indefinite general strike. There were demonstrations as well in Montréal and

Québec City, with the participation of a number on non-union child care centres.

The Conseil du statut de la femme (Québec's advisory council on the status of women) urged the government to take steps to improve conditions for child care workers, while Concertaction envisaged inviting the boards of directors of child care centres to resign en masse in September unless the government significantly improved funding for child care.

At the end of April, Minister Trépanier announced that the next budget would include measures that would solve the problem of low pay in the child care sector. The budget brought down on May 12 provided for a special subsidy of \$1 an hour for all child care employees. But it was a temporary measure that was supposed to last until September 30. The subsidy would then be replaced with tax measures and new terms of financial assistance, with the goal of minimizing the impact of rate increases for parents. Once again, the government refused to provide direct grants to child care centres, preferring instead to provide financial assistance to parents while allowing child care centres to raise their rates. An additional six million dollars was injected for payroll in child care centres. From then on, the battle was to focus on preserving this gain and entrenching a recurring wage subsidy.

Even though it was a temporary measure, the decision to directly subsidize pay in the child care sector set an important precedent.

In the past, the government had always refused to fund pay directly, insisting that the child care centres were independent entities and that the decisions were up to the boards of directors.

Regardless, the measure met with a divided reception in child care circles. It was seen as a step in the right direction, but it was already possible to imagine the conflicts between parents and staff when the subsidy ended. A number of people also felt that the new conditions for financial assistance to parents would not be enough to continue paying the \$1 raise without penalizing parents.

In August and September, the unions took advantage of the election campaign to question candidates about the solutions they envisaged for raising pay in child care. Then the Parti Québécois won the election. The new minister responsible for child care was Pauline Marois, who announced that the government would extend the pay subsidy until March 31, 1995, and maintain the tax credits and the measures of financial assistance for parents that the Liberal government had introduced. She also set up a working group – composed of representatives from the child care movement, including the CSN, and the OSGE – charged with examining funding for child care and more especially the issue of pay.

In March 1995, based on some of the recommendations from the working group, the government modified the system of

funding for child care centres. The new formula, simpler and fairer, provided for an increase in grants so as to make the \$1-an-hour increase permanent.

At the Socio-economic Summit Conference in 1996, the government announced the main elements of its new family policy. Over the next few months, the unions prepared their demands and the mobilization that led up to the 1999 agreements.

Part Three

Lessons of the past, plans for the future

In Québec, the struggle for universal, quality and affordable child care services has lasted thirty years so far. The early years were especially hard. Since there was never any guarantee that progress would be lasting, the struggle to preserve the meagre gains made was a daily battle. The progress has been spectacular, if the current situation is compared to 1970. But the thirty years were in fact three decades of slow progress, marked by setbacks at times and leaps forward at others when the government took responsibility for organizing child care services. This was the case, for example, with the Bacon plan in 1974, followed in 1979 by the first direct grants of \$2 per authorized space, and the creation of the Office des services de garde à l'enfance. Much later, in 1994, the government introduced the first grant earmarked exclusively for pay for child care staff; and between 1997 and 1999, it gradually established a new family policy that led to the historic 1999 agreements. Each of these turning points was preceded by a period of demands and mobilization.

Lessons to be drawn from the Québec model

Looking at what seems to be characteristic of the Québec model, it is worth reviewing these thirty years to identify a few hypotheses that might explain why – despite all the resistance and numerous problems – so much progress was made towards promoting child care services, and show how diligence and determination were able to win out over discouragement.

1. The impact of social movements: community organizing, labour and the women's movement

By the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, the main social movements, namely the women's movement, community organizations and the labour movement, were part of the battle for child care. These movements had solid roots in Québec, both in urban neighbourhoods and in the regions, and they had organizational structures whose action was felt at the province-wide level. The struggle for the right to paid work waged by the women's movement – backed up by the women's committees in the union organizations that took up and continued to press these demands – was especially

decisive in promoting child care services.

2. The involvement of parents and child care staff

In the early 1970s, there was a strong ideological tendency in social movements that focused on social action based on direct citizen involvement in the organization of services to meet various economic and social needs. Government was suspected of solely serving the interests of the dominant class: the bourgeoisie. So social movements sought to create autonomous services, outside the sphere of government, whose approach was judged to be too centralized, bureaucratic and customer-oriented. Local citizens' committees, grassroots medical and legal clinics, food co-ops and so on were organized in many towns and cities. This was the background for the creation of the first popular or community child care centres during the same period.

This was also the period when the first child care groups or coalitions were created, with both parents and workers as members. As a result, individual child care centres no longer had to defend the services they provided in isolation. The development of coalitions helped consolidate the network, provide training for parents who sat on boards of directors and professional development for workers, and prepare materials and tools for setting up child care services. They also played a major role as

spokespersons with government in defending child care interests and demands.

Even though some groups were more in favour of the idea of having the government take over child care services, the majority of parents and employees still seem to favour the current legal structures – which are the same organizational structures originally adopted – i.e., co-operatives and non-profit organizations controlled by parents or co-managed by parents and staff. It is quite possible that these organizations, which are rather small in size, with parent control and a certain degree of autonomy, are better at fostering a sense of belonging among parents and staff. And there is no overlooking the fact that in the past, it was the determination and endless hours of volunteer work by parents and staff that ensured the survival of child care centres. So this culture of participation and commitment characterizes the history of child care.

3. Mutual respect and complementary goals among the three parties: parents, employees and unions

It can be supposed that the success of the mobilization to promote child care services is also based on the mutual respect between employees, parents and unions on the child care centres' boards of directors. Keep in mind that in a context of chronic underfunding of child care – which was the case until just

recently – there was a potential for conflict between parents and employees. What little – very little – financial leeway that existed was determined mainly by two variables: the fees paid by parents and the level of wages paid to employees. Both the unions and the parents avoided exacerbating this source of tension by choosing instead to work together to demand that the government provide adequate funding for child care.

Union organizations also made efforts to take into account the interests and feelings of parents and children in building mobilization. Although strike action did play more of a role in the action plans in the 1990s, this tactic was not used all that much in the end. Demonstrations reflected the creativity of people in child care: balloons, clowns, songs and music were standard features. The unions also put a lot of energy and resources into informing parents and the general public about the rightness of their demands.

The central labour organizations obviously contributed to the establishment of diversified, affordable quality child care services, by encouraging workers who worked in them to join together to discuss their problems and come up with solutions. We have describe their work extensively in previous pages. But the results obtained with regard to the family policy and child care services were not unrelated to the ability of the main

labour organizations in Québec to rise above the purely work-related goals of their members and demand changes that were in the general interest. This is attested to in the positions that they developed at other times in fields as diverse as the development of jobs, tax reform, education, health care, social services, income security, etc.

Like other social movements, the labour movement in Québec has been closely associated with defining the family policy and ensuing action plans since the late 1980s. The labour movement's sustained involvement in fundamental societal debates helped make the central labour organizations credible representatives, respected by government. Without meaning to minimize their diverging viewpoints or interests in a number of cases, it is worth emphasizing their steadfastness in developing and defending innovative, progressive projects on fundamental social issues, including those related to the development of child care: women's right to work, child welfare, and participation in democratic life, including the organization of services for the population.

- 4. Child care: gains that contributed to recognition of the social economy**
Recognition in the May 1999 agreement of the work done by employees in child care was also a result of the fact that this sector is part of what is known as the social economy, a sector that is

increasingly recognized. Although it is referred to in several ways (social economy, solidarity-based economy, third sector), the social economy can be defined as a sector of activity in which there are various types of organizations (associations, co-operatives, non-profit enterprises) producing goods and services while pursuing both economic and social objectives, namely meeting the needs of the members of these organizations or the community as a whole. These enterprises operate in accordance with democratic rules, help strengthen social ties and the quality of democratic life in the community, and contribute to the creation of many jobs.

The public debate on the social economy¹⁵ was launched in Québec by the women's movement, which organized the Bread and Roses March in 1995. Nine demands were put forward to combat poverty, including the development of social infrastructures linked to the social economy: centres for women who were victims of violence, services for troubled youth or adults, and non-profit child care centres.

In October 1996, the Québec government organized a Summit

¹⁵ Social movements in Québec are heavily involved in the debate on the social economy. The CSN is the only central union organization that has taken an official position on the matter, though. See François AUBRY and Jean CHAREST, *Développer l'économie solidaire : éléments d'orientation* (October 1995), Montréal, CSN, Research department.

Conference on the economic and social future of Québec, with the participation of employers, the labour movement, women's groups and, for the first time, the community movement. The groups present agreed on a definition of the social economy and recognition of this sector's contribution to the development of Québec society on par with the public sector and the private, for-profit sector. There was also agreement that jobs in the social economy should be good-quality jobs, offering pay and working conditions comparable to those attached to jobs in the other sectors. So it was appropriate to apply the same principles to non-profit child care centres and improve the working conditions of their employees. The struggle for quality child care services in Québec is undoubtedly related to the struggle for recognition of the social economy, which took an important step forward at the 1996 socio-economic summit conference. It was during the same summit that the government made public the main elements of its new family policy.

The Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance

In July 1997, the government created the Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance, thereby raising the visibility of family policy and setting forth a government mission dealing exclusively with family and child welfare, namely:

- *to raise awareness of the importance of child and family welfare, to ensure that children and families are given a better place in society, and to provide them with the means to achieve their full potential – all to be accomplished in collaboration with partners working in this field;*
- *to give parents support to enable them to fully assume their role and preserve their bonds with their children;*
- *to take into account the diversity of family types and give priority attention to children's needs.*

Under the Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance, the mandates of the Secrétariat à la famille and the Office des services de garde à l'enfance were integrated. The new government department draws up guidelines and policies that foster the development of families' and children's full potential; it facilitates participation by individuals and groups or agencies concerned with family issues and child care services; and it advises the government on family and child welfare. It ensures that government departments and bodies take into account family concerns in their policies and programs; it also ensures coherent, complementary government action in this area; and it coordinates government decisions relating to child and family welfare.

The Ministère is responsible for implementing the Act respecting child care centres and child care services and as such must set up a network of child care centres, foster their development and offer children quality services. The Minister of Child and Family Welfare is responsible for enforcing the Act respecting family benefits.

...

The Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance has been setting up a network of child care centres since September 1997. The network is being created from existing non-profit child care centres and agencies.

To meet parents' needs more effectively, child care centres are offering now or will be phasing in:

- *full-time or part-time child care in child care centres or a home environment;*
- *evening, night-time or weekend child care when it appears necessary;*
- *educational activities;*
- *other family services: support for parents, help and advisory services, etc.*

Child care centres also provide a setting conducive to the prevention and detection of developmental and social problems.

...

Services will increasingly be offered on a flexible schedule to accommodate parents' needs. They might include specialized services provided in cooperation with social agencies or other partners. Child care centres also see themselves as places where parents, among themselves and with educators, exchange ideas and help one another.

APPENDIX 2

Trends in Child Care Spaces

Trends in child care spaces, selected years from 1980-81 to 2005-06

Year	Child care centres *	Home child care	Sub-total	School-based, school-age child care**	Total
1981	20,689	794	21,483	3,520	25,003
1987	36,264	3,860	40,124	18,961	59,085
1995	52,911	17,871	70,782	40,670	111,472
1998-99	63,200	31,116	94,316	82,413	177,800
2005-06	n/a	n/a	199,500	n/a	n/a

* Including spaces in non-profit and for-profit child care centres

** Children attending school-based, school-age child care regularly

Source : Office des services de garde à l'enfance, Annual reports, and ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance, *La Politique familiale, Bilan de la mise en œuvre des dispositions du Livre blanc*, March 1999

APPENDIX 3

Trends in Spending on Child Care Services

Trends in spending on child care services by the Québec government (1976-77 to 1979-80 and 1998-99) and the Office des services de garde à l'enfance (1981-82 to 1995-96), selected years

Year	Spending (\$ millions)
1976-77	4
1978-79	11
1979-80	16
1981-82	28
1983-84	40
1985-86	53
1987-88	79
1989-90	98
1991-92	138
1993-94	160
1995-96	211
1998-99	533

Source : Ghislaine DESJARDINS, *Faire garder ses enfants au Québec. Une histoire toujours en marche* (1991), Les Publications du Québec, Office des services de garde à l'enfance, *Rapport annuel 1994-95* ; Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Finances, *Impact de la politique familiale*, June 1999.

APPENDIX 4

Major gains for school-based, school-age child care employees

There are a number of gains in the settlement reached between the government of Québec and schoolboard support staff unions representing school-based, school-age child care employees. Here are the main points:

1. Pay

As of January 1, 2000, pay for educators will go up from \$14.22 to \$16.27 at the top of the scale, an increase of 14.42%. Pay for supervisors will go from \$16.59 to \$20.94, an increase of 26.22%.

2. Recognition of the work

A new job description for the job title of "supervisor" recognizes the organizing role and administrative duties of these employees.

The job title of "child care worker" has now been replaced by "educator". A new job description for educators recognizes their educational role and their role in working with children. As well, the work schedule for educators will include a period of time for participating in meetings on the planning and organization of child care services.

3. Job security

The notions of regular position and job security are finally recognized for child care service employees. As well, they will be entitled to the benefits of the salary insurance plan from now on.

The employer party agreed to recognize the CEGEP diploma (DEC) as a requirement for the position of supervisor. As well, a committee has been struck to examine the qualifications required for a position of educator. The committee's work could lead to pay adjustments in addition to those already obtained with this agreement.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30